Visit of British P.M. to strengthen trade ties

3057. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that British Prime Minister Tony Blair with a group of businessmen visited India in September 2005 to strengthen trade ties between the two countries;

(b) if so, details thereof and trade agreements/deals arrived at during his visit; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to India by these agreements/deals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (c) During the visit, the two sides signed "Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of UK" and "Memorandum of Understanding between the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons of India and the Department of Trade and Industry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on co-operation in the hydrocarbons sector". These Agreements have the potential to spur greater trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchange between the two countries and are expected to take Indo-British cooperation to a more intensive level.

Container Freight Station in Chennai

3058. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to set up container freight station in Chennai; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINSITRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) in the Department of Commerce provides Single Window clearance for setting up Inland Container depots/container Freight Stations (CFSs), as and when proposals are received from any private agency or Public Undertaking. There are a number of CFSs already functioning in Chennai.